

Afghan Road Construction: Vital to Security and Commerce

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SHARANA, Afghanistan – The 62nd Engineer Battalion units, also known as Task Force Hammer, are constructing roadways across Afghanistan that have vital military and commercial significance to the growing country. The roadways that the Engineers are building directly enable the US Army to access remote areas and provide security to the Afghan people. The by-product of this security is increased opportunity for development and governance within the



areas, as well as a gain of the support of the Afghan people—ultimately connecting the Afghan government to their own people. The 68th Combat Support Equipment (CSE) Company and Alpha Company, 62nd Engineer Battalion are building roads with these significant effects, from the village of Orgun-E to the village of Zerok and from the village Jani Kheyl to the village of Monari.

Wearing Surface Preparation of Jani Kheyl to Monari Road by A/62nd Soldiers

The roadways allow increased mobility of maneuver forces within the area of operations allowing forces to better secure and protect the Afghan people. In the case of the Orgun-E to Zerok Road, the road construction will make an area with extremely rugged terrain trafficable. The road also connects numerous city centers, to include Warzannah, Oshakay, and Zerok, thereby increasing Afghan commerce within the regions.

The Hammers are also constructing a 26 kilometer-long road from the villages of Jani Kheyl to Monari. Along this route are the district centers of Khar Kyot Castle (KKC), Jani Kheyl, Kushamond and Monari. Linking these district centers means a substantial increase in commerce and ease in travel for the Afghan people.

“Many Afghan people sit alongside the road during construction, amazed at the progress and the impact it will have on their daily lives,” says CPT Gamble Monney, the Alpha Commander.

Safe movement of gravel became the biggest challenge in the construction of the Jani Kheyl to Monari road. The nearest source of crushed gravel was at Khar Kyot Castle (KKC), 15 kilometers north of Jani Kheyl along a gravel road. Just as US and coalition forces are concerned with the security of their Soldiers, Afghan contractors place paramount importance on their security, and could not travel this route without coalition forces protecting their employees



Polish Soldiers provide security near the village of Jani Kheyi

and equipment. The distance and road conditions resulted in round trips of over one-and-a-half hours, limiting construction progress to about 300 meters per day. Vehicle maintenance due to the extremely demanding terrain provides significant challenges as well. Soldiers travel up to 240 km in a single day as they haul gravel and escort the Afghan contractor's trucks to the project site.

Shaping the Orgun-E to Zerok Road by 68th CSE Soldiers



Both of these projects represent significant operational challenges during construction because of the balance that the companies maintain between operations and security. Couple those challenges with the unforgiving terrain and it becomes much easier to understand the efforts that both Alpha Company and 68th Combat Support Equipment Company put into these projects

on a daily basis.

Success continues to be based on effective planning and organizing by the leadership as well as the Soldiers carrying out their jobs efficiently and effectively. All the while, our construction efforts rely heavily on local national contractors to push building materials as well execute basic construction tasks along the routes. These road projects truly test the equipment and manpower of the Hammers, but due to the skill and competence of the Soldiers working along with the local contractors, they are Building the Battlefield!